

# For the Jewish state, the Holocaust is a tool to be manipulated

If Zionism previously justified its crimes against the Palestinians in the name of the Holocaust, today it uses it as a tool to justify antisemitism itself.



By Orly Noy | November 20, 2020



Visitors seen at the Yad Vashem in Jerusalem ahead of Holocaust Remembrance Day, April 28, 2019. (Hadas Parush/Flash90)

Something remarkable happened within the same week that an internal Israeli government committee [approved](#) the appointment of Effi Eitam, a former IDF general and far-right politician, as chairperson of Yad Vashem, Israel's Holocaust museum. In a meeting with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, outgoing U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo [announced](#) that President Donald Trump intends to declare the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) movement antisemitic.

The proximity between the two announcements symbolizes the final phase in the manipulative metamorphosis that antisemitism and the Holocaust have undergone in the hands of Zionism.

Effi Eitam, a right-wing hawk and an avowed racist, made the following remarks [in 2006](#) during the memorial service for Lt. Amichai Merhav, who was killed in the Second Lebanon War:

We will have to do three things: expel most of the Arabs of Judea and Samaria [West Bank] from here. It is impossible with all these Arabs and it is impossible to give up the territory, because we have already seen what they are doing there. Some may be able to stay under certain conditions, but most will have to go. We will have to make another decision, and that is to kick out the Israeli Arabs from the political system. Here, too, things are clear as day: we have created a fifth column, a group of first-degree traitors, so we cannot continue to allow such a hostile and large presence in Israel's political system. Third, in the face of the Iranian threat, we will have to act differently from everything we have done until today. These are three things that will require a change in our ethics of warfare.

The expulsion of an occupied, native people from their land by the occupying force is a [war crime](#). Preventing the participation of citizens in the political system based on ethnic or national affiliation is akin to fascism. The incoming Yad Vashem chairperson does not shy away from expressing opinions that amount to war crimes in order to advance his political ambitions.



Effi Eitam speaks during the Gush Katif conference, Tel Aviv Museum, March 23, 2017. (Yossi Zeliger/Flash90)

Trump, as Libby Lenkinski [wrote on these pages](#), is the man who brought classic antisemitism back into fashion in the United States while being warmly embraced by the prime minister of the Jewish state.

Yad Vashem's fondness for fascists and war criminals is no secret either. Since Apartheid South Africa's Prime Minister John Vorster, a member of a pro-Nazi organization during World War II, visited Yad Vashem in 1976, the museum has hosted a delegation of Myanmar's military junta responsible for [war crimes and crimes against humanity](#).

It has opened its doors to Brazilian President [Jair Bolsonaro](#), the man

who has praised Hitler and openly supports the physical extermination of LGBTQ people, Brazil's indigenous population and a host of other atrocities, including rape, torture and military dictatorship. It has even hosted Hungarian Prime Minister [Viktor Orbán](#), who has expressed support for Miklós Horthy, Hungary's antisemitic leader during World War II; and South Sudan's [Anthony Lino Makana](#), a senior official in a government responsible for war crimes and crimes against humanity.



Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán tours Yad Vashem, Jerusalem, July 19, 2018. (Hadas Parush/Flash90)

If Zionism previously justified its crimes against the Palestinian people in the name of the Holocaust, today it uses the Holocaust as a tool to justify antisemitism itself in exchange for political profit. More than that: it allows an antisemite to define what antisemitism is. This is the bitter truth we face today — for the official State of Israel, the concept of the Holocaust and antisemitism are purely political means, and as such can be manipulated, distorted, and deceived, just like any other political tool.

After they dispossessed the Palestinians under the pretext of the Holocaust, Israeli leaders are now adopting an antisemite like Trump who will persecute the descendants of those same dispossessed Palestinians in the name of fighting antisemitism. And not only them, but also the countless Jews who show solidarity for the Palestinian struggle for justice. However, as long as there are people of conscience who shiver at the sight of this heinous exploitation of the Holocaust's memory, this will be difficult to do.

That is why Effi Eitam, a racist and proponent of war crimes, has been appointed to guard the memory of Jewish tragedy — so that the Holocaust forever remains subject to utilitarian and political manipulation. That is how Israel honors the dead in 2020.

*This article was first published in Hebrew on Local Call. Read it [here](#).*



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**Our team has been devastated by the horrific events of this latest war. The world is reeling from Israel's unprecedented onslaught on Gaza, inflicting mass devastation and death upon besieged Palestinians, as well as the atrocious attack and kidnappings by Hamas in Israel on October 7. Our hearts are with all the people and communities facing this violence.**

We are in an extraordinarily dangerous era in Israel-Palestine. The bloodshed has reached extreme levels of brutality and threatens to engulf the entire region. Emboldened settlers in the West Bank, backed by the army, are seizing the opportunity to intensify their attacks on Palestinians. The most far-right government in Israel's history is ramping up its policing of dissent, using the cover of war to silence Palestinian citizens and left-wing Jews who object to its policies.

This escalation has a very clear context, one that +972 has spent the past 14 years covering: Israeli society's growing racism and militarism, entrenched occupation and apartheid, and a normalized siege on Gaza.

We are well positioned to cover this perilous moment – but we need your help to do it. This terrible period will challenge the humanity of all of those working for a better future in this land. Palestinians and Israelis are already organizing and strategizing to put up the fight of their lives.

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